



MONTANA FISH, WILDLIFE & PARKS

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ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT CHECKLIST

PART I. PURPOSE OF AND NEED FOR ACTION

1. Project Title: Hellgate Hunters and Anglers Archery Range

2. Type of Proposed Action:

The Hellgate Hunters and Anglers proposes to develop a free, public archery range on Spurgin Park within Big Sky Park in Missoula during summer and fall of 2018.

3. Location Affected by Proposed Action:

The proposed Hellgate Hunters and Anglers (HHA) Hellgate Archery range will be located on Spurgin Park within Big Sky Park adjacent to the Montana Fish, Wildlife and Parks (FWP) office in Missoula, Montana on Spurgin Road, Lat. 46.8582, Long. -114.0618, SE1/4 Section 25, Township 13 North, Range 20 West.



Figure 1. Location of the Proposed Hellgate Archery Range

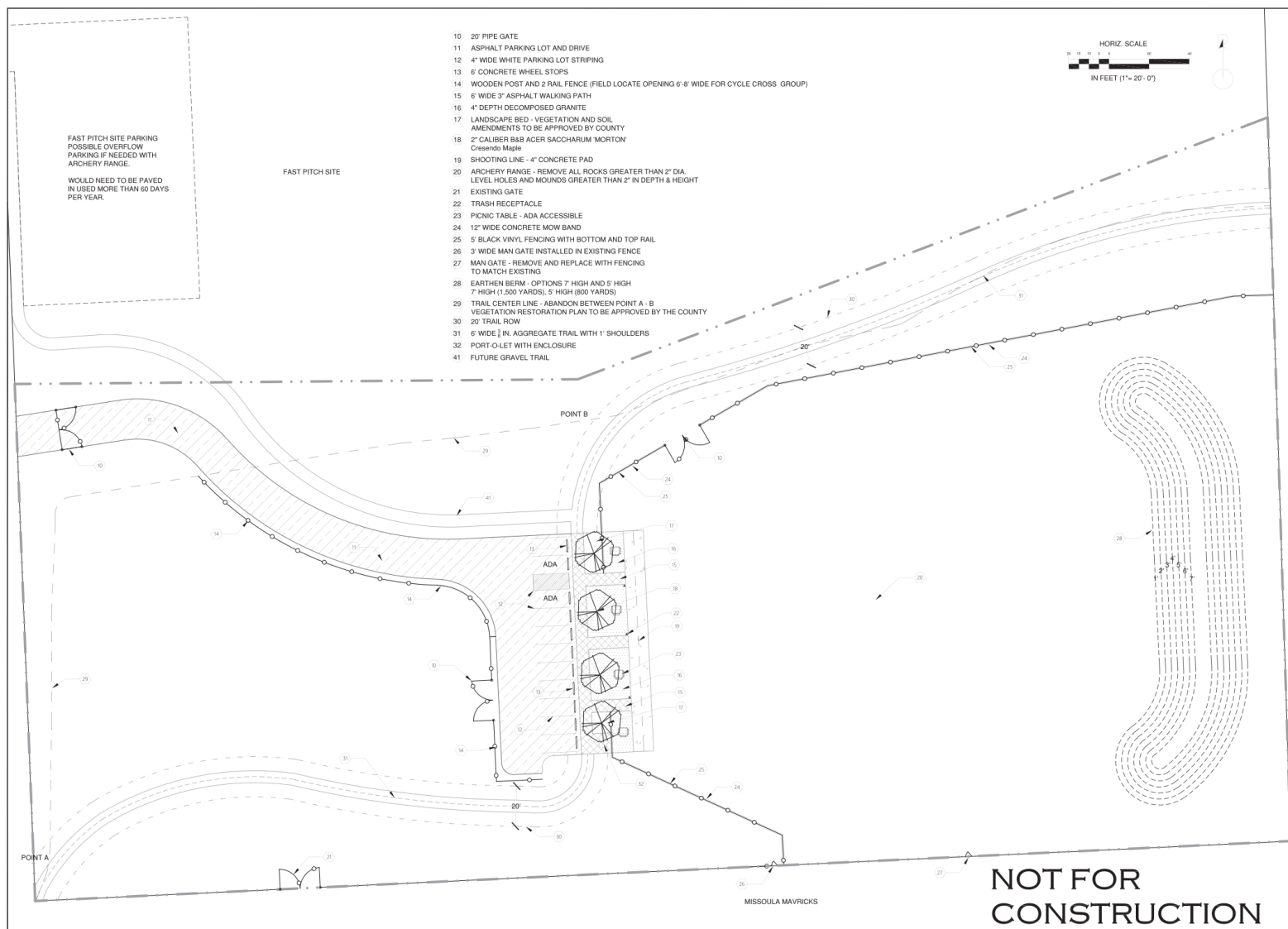


Figure 2. Concept Plan for the Proposed Hellgate Archery Range

4. Agency Authority for the Proposed Action: MCA 87-1-276 through 87-1-279 (Legislative established policies and procedures for the establishment and improvement of shooting ranges) and MCA 87-2-105 (Departmental authority to expend funds to provide training in the safe handling and use of firearms and safe hunting practices). The Montana Legislature has authorized funding for the establishment of a Shooting Range Development Program providing financial assistance for the development of shooting ranges. Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks (FWP) has responsibility for the administration of the program, including the necessary guidelines and procedures governing applications for funding assistance under the program.

To be eligible for grant assistance, a private shooting club or a private organization:

- (a)(i) *Shall accept in its membership any person who holds or is eligible to hold a Montana hunting license and who pays club or organization membership fees;*
- (ii) *May not limit the number of members;*
- (iii) *May charge a membership fee not greater than the per-member share of the club's or organization's*

reasonable cost of provision of services, including establishment, improvement, and maintenance of shooting facilities and other membership services; and

(iv) Shall offer members occasional guest privileges at no cost to the member or invited guest and shall make a reasonable effort to hold a public sight-in day each September, when the general public may use the shooting range for a day-use fee or at no cost; or

(b) Shall admit the general public for a reasonable day-use fee.

5. Need for the Action(s):

Missoula has an active archery community involved in both hunting and target archery. Currently there are no sanctioned archery ranges within the Missoula city limits and the ranges outside of Missoula are already heavily used. The proposed archery range will offer a safe site for archers to practice for hunting and recreation. The proximity of the range to the FWP Region 2 office also creates opportunities for educational classes and organized archery events with FWP, local schools, and archery retailers.

6. Objectives for the Action(s):

The objective of the HHA proposed project is to develop a free, public archery range on Missoula County's Big Sky Park open for day use only.

7. Project Size: estimate the number of acres that would be directly affected:

The proposed project would involve approximately 2 acres of the proposed 2-acre HHA Hellgate Archery range.

8. Affected Environment (A brief description of the affected area of the proposed project):

The HHA Hellgate Archery range is located on approximately 2 acres of public land owned in fee title by Missoula County and managed as Spurgin Park within Big Sky Park. The range is not located within a floodplain and there are no permanent surface waters or wetlands on the property. The HHA Hellgate Archery range will offer shooting opportunities for archery only.

9. Description of Project:

The HHA proposed project of developing a free, public archery range involves: widening and improving the driveway and parking lot for the range; building an earthen safety berm behind the targets; installing perimeter fencing with a gate and lock; installing signage; and purchasing lawn care equipment. The estimated budget includes:

Design- Engineering/Architect	\$ 5,000
Contracted Labor	\$ 20,000
Misc. Materials- Gate, Lock, Fencing, Signs	\$ 10,000
Construction- Excavation, Paving, Demolition	\$ 25,000
Equipment Purchase- Targets & Lawn Care	\$ 3,000
Equipment Rental	\$ 2,000
Concrete- Labor & Materials/Driveway & Parking Lot	\$ 5,000
Excavation-Berm & Trail	\$ 15,000
Gravel- Labor & Materials/Driveway & Parking Lot	\$ 10,000
Fencing- Labor & Materials	\$ 5,000
Total Project Budget	\$100,000
Total Funding Requested from FWP	\$ 50,000

10. List any Other Local, State, or Federal Agency that has Overlapping or Additional Jurisdiction:

None

Permits, Licenses and/or Authorizations:

<u>Agency Name</u>	<u>Permit</u>	<u>Date Filed/#</u>
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N/A

Funding:

<u>Agency Name</u>	<u>Funding Amount</u>
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Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks	\$50,000
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11. Affiliations, Cooperating Agencies, User Groups and/or Supporting Groups:

The proposed HHA Hellgate Archery range will be located on 2 acres of public land deeded to Missoula County and within Big Sky Park. This is a non-profit, private shooting club with no annual membership fee for individuals or families. The range will also have no day use fee for guests and members. The HHA plans to host various archery events at the Hellgate Archery range each year. Currently, the HHA is the only group planning to use the proposed range, though HHA expects other groups, such as FWP, will use the range once it is in operation.

12. History of the Planning and Scoping Process, and Any Public Involvement:

Even though the HHA is a non-profit, private shooting club, the proposed Hellgate Archery range will be located on public land so there has been public involvement in the planning process. Proposed range development proposals have been discussed with club members, Missoula County, the City of Missoula, FWP, sporting goods retailers, sportsmen groups, project vendors and contractors, and neighboring landowners.

13. List of Agencies Consulted/Contacted During Preparation of the EA:

Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks

14. Names, Address, and Phone Number of Project Sponsor:

William Hughes, 1127 S 4th Street W, Missoula, MT 59801. (406) 370-9316.

15. Other Pertinent Information:

The HHA is a non-profit, private shooting club. The closest shooting range providing similar shooting opportunities is located approximately 10 miles from the HHA Hellgate Archery range in Bonner, Montana.

Shooting range applications require the participating governing body to approve by resolution its submission of applications for shooting range-funding assistance. Resolution Date: January 2, 2018.

PART II. IDENTIFICATION OF THE PREFERRED ALTERNATIVES

Alternative A, the **Proposed Alternative**, and **Alternative B**, the **No Action Alternative**, were considered.

Alternative A (Proposed Alternative) is as described in Part I, paragraph 9 (Description of Project), to develop a free, public archery range in Missoula, Montana. There are beneficial consequences to acceptance of the **Proposed Alternative**.

Alternative B (No Action Alternative) Montana Fish, Wildlife and Parks Shooting Range Development Grant money would be denied and the area will remain as an active shooting range without the proposed improvements. The no action alternative would have no significant negative environmental or potentially

negative consequences. The range will continue on with present conditions. Land use would remain the same.

Description and analysis of reasonable alternatives (including the no action alternative) to the proposed action whenever alternatives are reasonably available and prudent to consider and a discussion of how the alternatives would be implemented: Only the proposed alternative and the no action alternative were considered. There were no other alternatives that were deemed reasonably available, nor prudent. Neither the proposed alternative nor the no action alternative would have significant negative environmental or potentially negative consequences.

Describe any Alternatives considered and eliminated from Detailed Study:

None. Only the proposed alternative and the no action alternative were considered. There was no other alternative that were deemed reasonably available, or prudent. Neither the **Proposed Alternative** nor the **No Action Alternative** would have significant negative environmental or potentially negative consequences.

List and explain proposed mitigating measures (stipulations): None

PART III. ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW

Abbreviated Checklist – The degree and intensity determines extent of Environmental Review. An abbreviated checklist may be used for those projects that are not complex, controversial, or are not in environmentally sensitive areas.

Table 1. Potential impact on physical environment.

Will the proposed action result in potential impacts to:	Unknown	Potentially Significant	Minor	None	Can Be Mitigated	Comments Below
1. Unique, endangered, fragile, or limited environmental resources				X		
2. Terrestrial or aquatic life and/or habitats				X		2
3. Introduction of new species into an area				X		
4. Vegetation cover, quantity & quality				X		4
5. Water quality, quantity & distribution (surface or groundwater)				X		5
6. Existing water right or reservation				X		
7. Geology & soil quality, stability & moisture				X		7
8. Air quality or objectionable odors				X		
9. Historical & archaeological sites				X		9
10. Demands on environmental resources				X		

Will the proposed action result in potential impacts to:	Unknown	Potentially Significant	Minor	None	Can Be Mitigated	Comments Below
of land, water, air & energy						
11. Aesthetics				X		11

2. & 5. . There are no delineated wetlands and no natural water sources within the area proposed for development. No critical wildlife habitat would be affected. Any resident or transient wildlife may temporarily leave the immediate area during construction.

4. The elimination of vegetation for the implementation of the proposed project will not change the overall abundance and diversity of plant species within the area. The proposed project occupies a small portion of the property. Due to prior land use, native vegetation has been disturbed in the area of the proposed project. Therefore, the proposed project will have a minor impact on native vegetation in the area.

7. The proposed project will cause limited displacement of soils but the developments will not substantially effect geological features or establish new erosion patterns. Soil disruption for this site is localized. Erosion control measures will be in effect and disturbed area will be reseeded.

9. This project uses no federal funds nor does it take place on state owned or controlled property; therefore, the Federal 106 Regulations and the State Antiques Act do not apply.

11. The property is already used as a shooting range so the proposed project will have no additional impact on the aesthetics of the property.

Table 2. Potential impacts on human environment.

Will the proposed action result in potential impacts to:	Unknown	Potentially Significant	Minor	None	Can Be Mitigated	Comments Below
1. Social structures and cultural diversity				X		
2. Changes in existing public benefits provided by wildlife populations and/or habitat				X		
3. Local and state tax base and tax revenue				X		
4. Agricultural production				X		4
5. Human health				X		5

6. Quantity & distribution of community & personal income				X		
7. Access to & quality of recreational activities				X		7
8. Locally adopted environmental plans & goals (ordinances)				X		
9. Distribution & density of population and housing				X		
10. Demands for government services				X		
11. Industrial and/or commercial activity				X		

4. The proposed HHA Hellgate Archery range is not adjacent to agricultural land used for grazing or hay production and the range is not in agricultural production. The proposed project will have no affect on agricultural production.

5. The proposed project will be designed to ensure the safety of HHA members, visitors to the range and Big Sky Park, and the surrounding residential community.

7. The proposed developments will increase shooting opportunities within the community.

PART IV. NARRATIVE EVALUATION AND COMMENT

All of the pertinent or potential impacts of the project have been reviewed, discussed, and analyzed. None of the projects reviewed were complex, controversial, or located in an environmentally sensitive area. The projects being implemented are already on an existing range or altered areas that together with the insignificant environmental effects of the proposed action, indicates that this should be considered the final version of the environmental assessment. There are no significant environmental or economic impacts associated with the proposed alternative.

The Hellgate Hunters and Anglers' Proposed Alternative, to develop a free, public archery range in Missoula, Montana, is supported by its members and the public. Therefore, Montana Fish, Wildlife and Parks should approve the Proposed Alternative (A) for the improvements as outlined in Part I, Paragraph 9.

PART V. ENVIRONMENTAL CONSEQUENCES

Does the proposed action involve potential risks or adverse effects, which are uncertain but extremely harmful if they were to occur? No

Does the proposed action have impacts that are individually minor, but cumulatively significant or

potentially significant? Individually, the proposed actions have minor impacts. However, it was determined that there are no significant or potentially significant cumulatively impacts. Cumulative impacts have been assessed considering any incremental impact of the proposed action when they are combined with other past, present, and reasonably foreseeable future actions, and no significant impacts or substantially controversial issues were found. There are no extreme hazards created with this project and there are no conflicts with the substantive requirements of any local, state, or federal law, regulation, standard or formal plan.

Recommendation and justification concerning preparation of EIS:

There are no significant environmental or economic impacts associated with the proposed alternative; therefore, an EIS is not required.

PART VI. EA CONCLUSION SECTION

Individuals or groups contributing to, or commenting on, this EA:

- William Hughes, 1127 S 4th Street W, Missoula, MT 59801. (406) 370-9316.
- MT Fish Wildlife and Parks

EA prepared by:

Andrea Darling, Darling Natural Resource Consulting, Montana City, MT 59634

Date Completed:

June 7, 2018

Describe public involvement, if any:

This draft EA will be advertised on FWP's web site and through a legal ad in the *Missoulian*, *Missoula, MT* announcing a public comment period. A press release will also announce the project and comment period.